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ABSTRACT

This document lists the test and item specifications for the Washington Assessment of Student Learning for fourth grade reading. The test section of the document explains that the purpose of this test is to measure Washington fourth grade students' level of proficiency in the Essential Academic Learning Requirements in reading. The reading test contains literary, informational, and task-oriented reading selections. The document lists strands and learning targets such as: reading for literary experience; and reading to learn new information and to perform tasks. It explains the content organization of the test, such as the characteristics of reading passages and the characteristics of test items. In addition, it explains the distribution of reading selections, test items, and score points. An addendum describes the scoring of open-ended items. The items specifications section explains that the test items were developed to ask students to demonstrate that they can comprehend important ideas and details in a text and that they can analyze, interpret, and think critically about a text. The document lists short answer and extended response item rules, and includes examples of learning targets, stimulus attributes, and item descriptions. (PM)

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Test Specifications for the Washington Assessment of Student Learning Grade 4 Reading

August, 2000

NOTE: These are the specifications (blueprint) that guided the development of the Writing assessment based on Washington State's Essential Academic Learning Requirements.

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this test is to measure Washington fourth-grade students' level of proficiency in the Essential Academic Learning Requirements in reading. The reading test contains literary, informational, and task-oriented reading selections. All reading selections, ranging up to 600 words and written at a difficulty level appropriate for fourth grade students, are accompanied by test items that assess proficiency in the components of the Essential Academic Learning Requirements in reading. Test items are of the following types:

• Multiple-choice: Student chooses from three responses provided.

• Short-answer: Student constructs short response-phrase(s) or sentence(s).

• Extended-response: Student constructs longer, more sustained response sentences or paragraph(s).

Each form of the reading and listening tests attempt to cover all identified Learning Targets, but this may not always be practical; not every text allows every type of question to be asked. A single, comprehensive total listening score is reported based on the performance standards established by a standard-setting committee. The reading test also offers two subscale reports (reported as strengths or weaknesses) in Reading for Literary Experience and two subscale reports in Reading to Learn New Information and to Perform a Task. The first subscale report for each type of text reflects students' comprehension of important ideas and details, and the second reflects students' ability to analyze, interpret, and think critically about what they have read.

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II. STRANDS AND LEARNING TARGETS

Reading for Literary Experience (Reading EALR 3.3):

Strand LC: Comprehends important ideas and details (Reading EALR 2.1)

Given a literary text to read silently, learners respond to items in which they:

1. Demonstrate understanding of theme or message and supportive details (Reading EALR 2.1.2)

2. Summarize with evidence from the reading (Reading EALR 2.1.2)

3. Make inferences or predictions based on the reading (Reading EARL 2.1.4)

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4. Interpret vocabulary critical to the meaning of the text (Reading EALR 1.2.1)

5. Order steps, sequence, and/or parts from the reading (Reading EALRs 1.4.2, 2.2.2)

Strand LA: Analyzes, interprets, and thinks critically (Reading EALRs 2.2, 2.3)

Analyzes and interprets

Given a literary text to read silently, learners respond to items in which they:

6. Demonstrate understanding of literary elements (genres; story elements such as plot, character, setting; stylistic devices) and graphic elements/illustrations (Reading EALR 1.4.1, 1.4.3)

7. Compare and contrast elements of text (Reading EALR 2.2.1)

8. Make connections within and among texts (Reading EALR 2.2.1)

Thinks critically

Given a literary text to read silently, learners respond to items in which they:

9. Analyze author's purpose and evaluate effectiveness for different audiences (Reading EALR 2.3.2)

10. Extend information beyond text—apply information, give a response to reading, express insight gained from reading (Reading EALR 2.3.3)

Reading to Learn New Information and to Perform Tasks (Reading EALRs 3.1 and 3.2)

Strand IC: Comprehends important ideas and details

Given an informational or task-oriented text to read silently, learners respond to items in which they:

11. Demonstrate understanding of major ideas and supportive details (Reading EALR 2.1.2)

12. Summarize with evidence from the reading (Reading EALR 2.1.2)

13. Make inferences or predictions based on the reading (Reading EARL 2.1.4)

14. Interpret vocabulary critical to the meaning of the text (Reading EALR 1.2.1)

15. Order steps, sequence, and/or parts from the reading (Reading EALRs 1.4.2, 2.2.2)

Strand IA: Analyzes, interprets, and thinks critically

Analyzes and interprets

Given an informational or task-oriented text to read silently, learners respond to items in which they:

16. Demonstrate understanding of text features (titles, headings, and other information divisions, table of contents, captions) and graphic features Reading EALR 1.5.2)

17. Compare and contrast information presented (Reading EALR 2.2.1)

18. Make connections within and among texts (Reading EALR 2.2.1)

Thinks critically

Given an informational or task-oriented text to read silently, learners respond to items in which they:

19 Analyze author's purpose (including distinguishing between fact and opinion) and evaluate effectiveness for different audiences (Reading EALRs 2.3.1, 2.3.2)

20. Extend information beyond text—apply information, give a response to reading, express insight gained from reading (Reading EALR 2.3.3)

III. CONTENT ORGANIZATION

General Characteristics

• It is not possible to measure every Learning Target on every form of the test. However, Learning Targets from each strand are tested on each form.

• The material presented is balanced, culturally diverse, well written, and of interest to 4th-grade students. The passages and items are fairly presented in order to gain a true picture of students' reading skills.

• Across all forms, a balance of gender and active/passive roles by gender is maintained.

• Character names on each form are representative of the ethnic diversity of Washington students.

• No resource materials may be used by students during the testing of reading.

• Responses are scored with emphasis on communication of ideas. Conventions of writing (sentence structure, word choice, usage, grammar, and mechanics) are generally disregarded unless they substantially interfere with communication.

Estimated Time for the Reading Test: 75 minutes, divided into two sessions with a break in between.

Characteristics of Reading Passages

Reading passages used in the test are drawn from published sources and include poetry, essays, short stories, novel/book excerpts, plays, pamphlets, and newspaper and magazine articles. Task-oriented texts consist of schedules, recipes, instructions, and other such pieces likely to be within the experience of a fourth-grade student. As appropriate, passages utilize illustrations and other graphic features. Each assessment form contains one selection that is made up of two short passages, e.g., a poem and a short piece of fiction, or a set of directions and a short piece of informational text. This pairing allowed construction of items that call for students to make connections among texts.

All passages are reviewed to eliminate cultural or other forms of bias that might disadvantage any group (or groups) of students. The passages avoid subject matter that might prompt emotional distress on the part of some students. It was critical that the reading texts used be well written, of interest to fourth-grade students, and, in all appropriate cases, factually correct. Reading test passages also reflect Washington's cultural diversity, and as they are presented they possess structural integrity that allows them to be self-contained. Permission to use selections from copyrighted material were obtained as necessary. The reading difficulty of the passages was validated using traditional readability formulas and teacher judgment. The overall suitability of each passage was judged by Washington's reading content committee.

Characteristics of Test Items

• Items deal with issues and details that are of consequence in the text and central to students' understanding and interpretation of the text.

• Test items are varied and address as many Learning Targets as the passages allow.

• To the greatest extent possible, no item or response choice "clues" the answer to any other item.

• The Learning Target assessed has been specified for each item.

• Items are reviewed to eliminate unfair representations of gender, race, individuals with disabilities, or cultural or religious groups.

• Test items are tied closely and particularly to the passage from which they derive, so that the impact of outside (prior) knowledge, while never wholly avoidable, was minimized.

• Each reading test form contains 18-22 multiple-choice items.

• Each multiple-choice item contains a question (or incomplete statement) and three answer (or completion) options, only one of which is correct. Correct answers are distributed as evenly as possible among A's, B's, and C's.

• The three choices are approximately the same length, have the same format, and are syntactically and semantically parallel; students should not be able to rule out a wrong answer or identify a correct response simply by virtue of its looking or sounding different.

• Distracters adopt the language and sense of the material in the selection so that students must think their way to the correct answer rather than simply identify incorrect responses by virtue of a distracter's obviously inappropriate nature.

• Distracters should always be plausible (but of course incorrect) in the context of the selection.

• All items must clearly indicate what is expected in a response and must help students focus their response.

• Constructed-response items are of two types: short-answer and extended-response.

• Each short-answer or extended-response item gives clear indications of what is required of students; an item-specific scoring guide was developed for each short-answer and extended-response item, and information from the pilot was used to refine these scoring guides for use with the final forms of the test. Scoring guides follow a "focused holistic" model in which the score for the response is based on overall quality, but also results from focusing on several important features of the student's performance.

a. Short-answer items are scored with a 3-level scoring guide (0-2) in which students may receive full credit, partial credit, or no credit.

b. Extended-response items are scored with a 5-level scoring guide (0-4); the levels may be summarized as Extensive, Essential, Partial, Minimal, and Unsatisfactory.

• A reading test form contains 7-9 short-answer items, each of which requires students to construct a short response, defined as phrase(s) or sentence(s), and focusing on one Strand.

• Each reading test form also contains 2 extended-response items, each of which requires students to construct a longer, more sustained response, defined as sentences or paragraph(s), and focusing on one Strand.

• Extended-response items generally require longer, more detailed responses providing more evidence, information, or examples.

• The two types of constructed-response items may also be differentiated by the number of lines available for the response.

• Order of presentation of item types is dictated by logic.

• When an item has two parts, they appear separately, with lines following each part. This encourages students to notice and answer both parts.

• With paired passages, items for each follow each passage. The items requiring comparison between the passages appear last, after both passages. There will always be more than one item that compares the two passages, and preferably more than two.

• Care is taken that all items avoid language that shows bias or is otherwise likely to be offensive to or to disadvantage a particular group of students.

• Items are worded precisely and clearly. The better focused an item, the more reliable and fair it is certain to be, and the more likely all students will understand in the same way what is required of them.

IV. DISTRIBUTION OF READING SELECTIONS, TEST ITEMS, AND SCORE POINTS

Each reading test form includes two or three literary selections, generating approximately half the total test points, and one or two informational selections and one or two task-oriented selections, generating approximately half the total test points. In addition,

- One selection in each form of the test consists of two short passages, e.g., a poem and a short piece of fiction, or a set of directions and a short piece of informational text. This pairing allowed construction of items that call for students to make connections among texts.

- Many of the selections are short, i.e., 200-300 words.

- One selection on a form may be longer (as long as 600 words) to allow for development of items that go with more extended text.

- The reading selections together total about 1500 words.

- Total number of multiple-choice items does not exceed 22.

- Total number of short-answer items does not exceed 9.

- Total number of extended-response items does not exceed 2.

Reading Test: Item distribution by text type and strand

Text types/Strands	**No. of Reading Selections**	**No. of Words Per Passage**	**No. of MC Items**	**No. of SA Items**	**No. of ER Items**
Literary	2-3	up to 750	9-12	3-5	1
Comprehends important ideas and details			3-8	1-2	0
Analyzes, interprets, & thinks critically			4-8	2-4	1
Informational and Task-oriented	3-4	up to 750	9-12	3-5	1
Comprehends important ideas and details			3-8	1-2	0
Analyzes, interprets, & thinks critically			4-8	2-4	1
Total	6	up to 1500	18-22	7-9	2

V. TEST AND ITEM SCORING

Each multiple-choice item is worth 1 point, each short-answer item is worth 2 points, and each extended-response item is worth 4 points.

Reading Test: Typical distribution of score points by item type

Type	Number of Items	Total Points	Percent of the Total Score
Multiple-choice	20	20	46 %
Short-answers	8	16	36 %
Extended-response	2	8	18 %
Total	30	44	

VI. Addendum (Feb. 1998)

SCORING OF OPEN-ENDED ITEMS

Individual scoring criteria will be developed for each constructed-response item. Short-answer items will be scored on a scale of 0 to 2 points, and extended-response items will be scored on a scale of 0 to 4 points. The following scoring criteria are used to assess basic comprehension of main ideas and details and analysis, interpretation, and critical thinking about text. Specific scoring criteria will be developed for each item based on these generic rules.

Scoring Rules for Short Answer Items

Scoring rules for items that assess <u>main ideas and details</u>:

2 A two point response:

• shows thorough comprehension of main idea and important details

• uses ample, relevant information from text(s) to support responses

1 A one point response:

• shows partial comprehension of main idea and important details (may grasp main idea but show difficulty distinguishing between important and unimportant details; may miss part of fundamental who/what/where/when/why)

• attempts to use information from text(s) to support responses; support may be limited or irrelevant

0 A 0 point response shows little or no understanding of the passage main ideas and details.

Scoring rules for items that assess <u>analysis, interpretation, and critical thinking about text</u>:

2 A two point response:

• analyzes appropriate information and/or makes thoughtful connections between whole texts/parts of texts

• develops thoughtful interpretations of text

• uses sufficient, relevant evidence from text(s) to support claims

1 A one point response:

• analyzes limited information and/or makes superficial connections between whole texts/parts of texts

• develops conventional or simplistic interpretations of text

• attempts to use evidence from text(s) to support claims; support may be limited or irrelevant

0 A 0 point response shows little or no understanding of the passage main ideas and details.

Scoring rules for items that assess summarizing and paraphrasing main ideas:

2 A two point response shows thorough comprehension of main ideas

1 A one point response shows partial comprehension of main ideas

0 A 0 point response shows little or no understanding of the passage main ideas and details.

Scoring Rules for Extended Response Items

Scoring rules for items that assess analysis, interpretation, and thinking about text:

4 Points: Meets all relevant criteria

• thoroughly analyzes appropriate information and/or makes insightful connections between whole texts/parts of texts

• develops insightful interpretations of text

• uses ample, relevant evidence from text(s) to support claims

3 Points: Meets most relevant criteria

• analyzes appropriate information and/or makes thoughtful connections between whole texts/parts of texts

• develops thoughtful interpretations of text

• uses sufficient, relevant evidence from text(s) to support claims

2 Points: Meets some relevant criteria

• analyzes limited information and/or makes superficial connections between whole texts/parts of texts

• develops conventional or simplistic interpretations of text

• attempts to use evidence from text(s) to support claims; support may be limited or irrelevant

1 Point: Meets few relevant criteria

• shows difficulty analyzing information and/or makes weak connections between whole texts/parts of texts

• may not develop beyond literal interpretation of text

• uses little or no evidence to support claims

Item Specifications for the Washington Assessment of Student Learning Grade 4 Reading

August 2000

Purpose

The purpose of the reading test is to measure Washington fourth-grade students' level of proficiency in the Essential Academic Learning Requirements in reading. To thoughtfully and equitably achieve this goal, test items were developed that ask students to demonstrate that they can comprehend important ideas and details in a text and that they can analyze, interpret, and think critically about a text. The test items were developed to measure the specific Learning Targets listed on the following pages.

There are some general considerations that made the task of item writing more efficient and fruitful. These considerations included, but were not limited to, the following:

Ask questions that deal with issues and details that are of consequence in the text and central to students' understanding and interpretation of the text.

Take care that all items avoid language that shows bias or is otherwise likely to be offensive to or to disadvantage a particular group of students.

Word items precisely and clearly. The better focused an item, the more reliable and fair it is certain to be, and the more likely all students will understand in the same way what is required of them.

Make sure that all multiple-choice options—key and distracters—are similar in length and in syntax; students should not be able to rule out a wrong answer or identify a correct response simply by virtue of its looking or sounding different. Also, create distracters that adopt the language and sense of the material in the selection so that students must think their way to the correct answer rather than simply identify incorrect responses by virtue of a distracter's

obviously inappropriate nature. Distracters should always be plausible (but of course incorrect) in the context of the selection.

All items must clearly indicate what is expected in a response and must help students focus their response. Constructed-response items are of two types: short-answer and extended-response. Extended-response items generally require longer more detailed responses providing more evidence, information, or examples. The two types of constructed-response items may also be differentiated by the number of lines available for the response.

In summary, reading test items will ask questions that address issues of importance in a text, and the questions will be consequential, concise, focused, and fair.

Additional Rules for Developing Constructed-response Items: Grade 4

Short Answer Item Rules

Items should ask students to give evidence they have understood or analyzed text. This usually means ending with "Use information from the story in your answer" or, preferably, "Use an example (or two examples, details, ideas) from the story in your answer."

Item stems will be short and succinct with simple syntax and familiar words.

Each short-answer item will give clear indications of what is required of students (e.g., if two words are required, the stem will indicate this; if two details are required, the stem will indicate this).

Anything required by the scoring rule will be asked for in the item stem.

Any short-answer item that requires personal response or connections beyond the text will ask for references to how the student's ideas relate to the text (e.g., "How did the story help you . . .?").

Some items will give students a choice of three viable answers and require students to choose one and support it. (See examples in Item Specifications.) All choices should be viable, and the item should indicate this. The scoring for the item will depend upon the quality or quantity of support given, and the item should indicate this.

Extended Response Item Rules

Items should ask students to give evidence they have understood or analyzed text. This usually means ending with "Use information from the story in your answer" or, preferably, "Use an example (or two examples, details, ideas) from the story in your answer."

Item stems will be short and succinct as possible with simple syntax and familiar words.

Each extended-response item will give clear indications of what is required of students (e.g., if five words are required, the stem will indicate this; if three examples are required, the stem will indicate this).

Anything required by the scoring rule will be asked for in the item stem.

Any extended-response item that requires personal response or connections beyond the text will

ask for references to how the student's ideas relate to the text (e.g., "How did the story help you . . .?"). NOTE: AVOID PERSONAL RESPONSE EXTENDED.

Some items will give students a choice of (a number of) viable answers and require students to choose one and support it. (See examples in Item Specifications.) All choices should be viable, and the item should indicate this. The scoring for the item will depend upon the quality or quantity of support given, and the item should indicate this.

For each learning target, item specifications are organized under three headings or sections:

Learning Target

Stimulus Attributes

Item Description

The first heading states the learning target, which summarizes one or more benchmarks as identified in the reading section of the Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) Technical Manual (February 26, 1997).

The second section indicates the appropriate characteristics (format and content) of the reading stimuli that will precede any items.

The third section gives a description of the items that can be used to assess the learning target. This will include the rules for item types, item formats, response formats, and distractors.

Strand LC: Comprehends important ideas and details

Learning Target 1: Demonstrate understanding of theme or message and supportive details (2.1.2).

Stimulus Attributes:

1. Format: Literary text

2. Content: The selection must contain a clear theme or message that is supported by details.

Item Description:

1. Possible item type: M, S

2. Item format: Clearly states requirement that students demonstrate understanding of a theme or message or of the details that support it.

3. Response format: Response may be sentence(s) or phrase(s).

4. Multiple-choice items:

Example of stem:

What do you think the author is telling readers in this story?

Example of response choices:

a. The correct response is the best statement of the message of the story.

b. One incorrect response is not the best statement of the message because it contains an idea not included in the passage.

c. One incorrect response is not the best statement of the message because it contains an unimportant idea that is stated in the passage.

Example of stem:

The message of this poem has to do with sharing. Which of the following ideas from the poem helps get this message across?

Example of response choices:

a. The correct response is a detail that supports the message.

b. One incorrect response is a detail in the poem that does not support the message.

c. One incorrect response is a detail that appears to support the message but is not actually included in the selection.

5. Short-answer items:

Example of item:

(Feeling ____) is an important idea in this story. How does (character) help (character) to feel _____? Use a detail from the story to explain your answer.

Strands LC and IC: Comprehends important ideas and details

Learning Targets 2 and 12: Summarize with evidence from the reading (2.1.2).

Stimulus Attributes:

1. Format: Literary, informational, task-oriented text

2. Content: The selection must be substantive enough to allow for the type of summary called for in the item.

Item Description:

1. Possible item type: M, S

2. Item format: Clearly states requirement that students choose or construct a reasonable summary of a text.

3. Response format: Response may be sentence(s) or phrase(s), as in a title.

4. Multiple-choice items:

Example of stem:

Choose the sentence that best tells what (the selection) is about.

Example of response choices:

a. The correct response is the best summary.

b. One incorrect response is not the best summary because it contains an idea not included in the passage.

c. One incorrect response is an idea included in the passage that is too narrow to be acceptable as a summary.

5. Short-answer items:

Example of item:

Write a sentence that tells what the poem is about. Then write ideas from the poem that helped you know what the poem is about.

Example of item:

Summarize the main events in the story. Include two important events.

Strands LC and IC: Comprehends important ideas and details

Learning Targets 3 and 13: Make inferences or predictions based on the reading (2.1.4).

Stimulus Attributes:

1. Format: Literary, informational, task-oriented text

2. Content: For inference: Must be significant idea in the selection, but not directly stated; the selection must contain sufficient clues that the idea may be inferred. For prediction: A selection must provide sufficient clues, but without stating a likely outcome or action.

Item Description:

1. Possible item types: M, S

2. Item format: Clearly states requirement that students use evidence from the text to grasp an important idea not directly stated in the text, or that they make a reasonable prediction of an outcome or action.

3. Response format: Response may be word(s), phrase(s), or sentence(s).

4. Multiple-choice items for Inference:

Example of stem:

Which sentence tells an idea you can get from this (selection)?

Example of response choices:

a. The correct response is an idea that can reasonably be inferred from the text.

b. Incorrect responses are ideas that it seems one might infer from the text but that the selection does not really support.

Multiple-choice items for Prediction:

Example of stem:

What do you think (character) will do now that (cite circumstances at end of story)?

Example of response choices:

a. The correct response is an outcome that can reasonably be predicted given the information in the text.

b. Incorrect responses are not appropriate given the information in the text.

5. Short-answer items:

Example for Inference:

These words might all be used to describe _____ in the selection. Circle the word you think best describes _____.

Adjective Adjective Adjective

Use two details from the selection to explain your choice.

Example for Prediction:

What do you think (character) will do the next time he meets (another character)? Use information from the story to explain why you think this.

Strands LC and IC: Comprehends important ideas and details

Learning Targets 4 and 14: Interpret vocabulary critical to the meaning of the text. (1.2.1)

Stimulus Attributes:

1. Format: Literary, informational, task-oriented text

2. Content: The selection containing the vocabulary (word, phrase, or expression) must have sufficient context clues for the reader to determine its meaning.

Item Description:

1. Possible item types: M

2. Item format: Clearly states requirement that students interpret a word, phrase, or expression critical to the meaning of a text.

3. Response format: Word(s), phrase(s), or sentence(s).

4. Multiple-choice items:

Example of stem:

What is the meaning of (phrase or expression) in this (selection)?

Example of response choices:

a. The correct response, which may be understood from the text through thoughtful reading.

b. Two distracters that are syntactically correct and related in some general way to the passage

Strands LC and IC: Comprehends important ideas and details

Learning Targets 5 and 15: Order steps, sequence, and/or parts from the reading. (1.4.2, 2.2.2)

Stimulus Attributes:

1. Format: Literary, informational, task-oriented text

2. Content: The selection must contain a clearly defined sequence, steps, or parts.

Item Description:

1. Possible item type: M, S

2. Item format: Clearly states requirement that students analyze steps, sequence, or parts from the reading.

3. Response format: Response may be sentence(s), phrase(s), or graphic(s).

4. Multiple-choice items:

Example of stem:

Which of the following is the first point the author makes?

Example of response choices:

a. The correct response is the first point the author makes in the passage.

b. One incorrect response contains a point not included in the passage.

c. One incorrect response is a point that is not the first one the author makes.

5. Short-answer items:

Example of item:

Choose three of the main events in the story and write them in the order in which they happened.

Example of item:

Tell in order the main steps in making _____.

Strand LA: Analyzes, Interprets, and Thinks Critically

Learning Target 6: Demonstrate understanding of literary elements (genres; story elements such as plot, character, setting; stylistic devices) and graphic elements/illustrations. (1.4.3)

Stimulus Attributes:

1. Format: Literary text

2. Content: The selection may contain one or more of the following elements:

a. Plot: A series of episodes in which a problem is developed and resolved.

b. Characters: The people, animals, or personified objects in the story.

c. Setting: The location(s) and time(s) of the story.

d. Point-of-view: The vantage point from which the author presents the story.

e. Problem (or conflict): The central tension that drives the story.

f. Solution (or resolution): The dissolving of tension at the end of the story.

g. Stylistic devices: For Grade 4, figurative language and exaggeration.

h. Graphic elements/illustrations

Item Description:

1. Possible item types: M, S, E

2. Item format: Clearly states requirement that students give evidence of having analyzed some significant literary element.

3. Response format: Response may be phrase(s), graphic(s), sentence(s), or paragraph(s).

4. Multiple-choice items:

Example of stem:

Who is the main character in the story?

Example of response choices:

a. The correct response represents a reasonable conclusion drawn through analysis of the selection.

b. Incorrect responses are faulty conclusions that might be drawn through less-than-careful analysis of the selection.

5. Short-answer items:

Example of item:

These words might all be used to describe (setting) in the story. Circle the word you think best describes the setting in this story.

Adjective Adjective Adjective

Use two details from the story to explain your choice.

Example of item:

What is the setting at the beginning of this story?

Why is the setting important to the beginning of this story?

6. Extended-response items:

Example of item:

What problem did (character) face? What are three steps she took to solve this problem?

Strand LA: Analyzes, Interprets, and Thinks Critically

Learning Target 7: Compare and contrast elements of text. (2.2.1)

Stimulus Attributes:

1. Format: Literary text

2. Content: The selection must contain sufficient information for the reader to identify similarities and differences between/among elements such as characters, settings, or events.

Item Description:

1. Possible item types: M, S, E

2. Item format: Clearly states requirement that students compare and contrast elements in a literary text such as characters, settings, or events.

3. Response format: Responses may be phrase(s), graphic(s), sentence(s), or paragraph(s).

4. Multiple-choice items:

Example of stem:

Which sentence tells how (two characters in the story) are alike?

Example of response choices:

a. The correct response identifies an appropriate similarity.

b. Incorrect responses do not identify similarities; they may focus on something that is true of one character or the other but not both.

5. Short-answer items:

Example of item:

How are (two characters in the story) alike? How are they different?

Example of item:

Write two examples from the story that show how different people react to (something in story).

6. Extended-response items:

Example of item:

How are (two characters in the story) alike? Tell about an event in the story that helps you know this.

How are (two characters) different? Tell about an event in the story that helps you know this.

Strands LA and IA: Analyzes, Interprets, and Thinks Critically

Learning Targets 8 and 18: Make connections within and among texts. (2.2.1)

Stimulus Attributes:

1. Format: Literary, informational, and task-oriented text

2. Content: The selection must contain sufficient information to identify connections (example: cause and effect) within a text. Short selections are paired to give opportunities to make connections between two texts--likely comparison/contrast.

Item Description:

1. Possible item types: M, S, E

2. Item format: Clearly states requirement that students make connections within a text (example: cause and effect) or among texts (example: comparison/contrast).

3. Response format: Responses may be phrase(s), graphic(s), sentence(s), or paragraph(s).

4. Multiple-choice items:

Example of stem; Connections within text:

Which sentence explains why (event) happened?

Example of response choices:

a. The correct response is a reasonable statement of causation.

b. Incorrect responses are events in the story that thoughtful reading reveals are not really the cause.

Example of stem; Connections among texts:

How does (story character's) feeling about (subject) compare to the poet's feeling about (subject)?

Example of response choices:

a. The correct response identifies an appropriate similarity.

b. Incorrect responses identify elements that exist in one passage but not in other.

5. Short-answer items:

Example of item, Connections within text:

Explain why (event) happened. Use two ideas from the story in your answer.

Example of item, Connections among texts:

Which character in the story is most like the speaker in the poem? Give information from the story and the poem to explain how they are alike.

6. Extended-response items:

Example of item, Connections within text:

What problem does the selection describe? What are three causes of this problem?

Example of item, Connections among texts:

Descriptions of the _____ help you to know how the main character in the story and the person speaking in the poem feel about the _____. Write two descriptions of the _____ from the story and two from the poem in the chart below. (2-column chart)

Now compare how the main character in the story and the person speaking in the poem feel about the _____.

Strand LA: Analyzes, Interprets, and Thinks Critically

Learning Target 9: Analyze author's purpose and evaluate effectiveness for different audiences. (2.3.2)

Stimulus Attributes:

1. Format: Literary text

2. Content: The selection must allow consideration of author's purpose and intended audience.

Item Description:

1. Possible item types: M, S, E

2. Item format: Clearly states requirement that students analyze author's purpose and/or evaluate the effectiveness of a piece for different audiences.

3. Response format: Responses may be phrase(s), graphic(s), sentence(s), or paragraph(s).

4. Multiple-choice items:

Example of stem:

Which of the following best sums up the author's purpose in writing this poem?

Example of response choices:

a. The correct response identifies an appropriate purpose.

b. Incorrect responses slightly misstate the purpose, emphasizing some less appropriate aspect of the piece.

5. Short-answer items:

Example of item:

How do you think the poet wanted you to feel when you read this poem? Use examples from the poem to support your response. Do you feel this way? Explain why or why not. ***(NOTE: Too many questions in one item; needs to be scaffolded)***

6. Extended-response items:

Example of item:

For a poem or piece that might have different meanings to different people)

How do you feel about what the author has to say in this poem? Use examples from the poem to explain why you feel this way.

How would you feel if you were a (name different kind of person)? Explain why you would feel this way.

Strands LA and IA: Analyzes, Interprets, and Thinks Critically

Learning Targets 10 and 20: Extend information beyond text (apply information, give a personal response to reading, express insight gained from reading) (2.3.3)

Note: Avoid personal response items; focus on applying information.

Stimulus Attributes:

1. Format: Literary, informational, and task-oriented text

2. Content: The selection must be substantive enough to allow a student to extend, beyond the text, the information they have gotten from the text.

Item Description:

1. Possible item types: M (for applying information only), S, E

2. Item format: Clearly states requirement that students extend what they have learned from the reading, applying the information, giving a personal response to it, or expressing insight they have gained from it.

3. Response format: Response may be phrase(s), sentence(s) or paragraph(s) and/or graphic(s).

4. Multiple-choice items (use multiple-choice only for applying information):

Example of stem:

In which case would you find the information in this article most useful?

Example of response choices:

a. The correct response identifies a situation in which the information from the article would be clearly useful.

b. One type of incorrect response identifies a situation in which the information from the article would not be useful.

c. One type of incorrect response identifies a situation in which the information from the article would be relevant but not so clearly useful as the situation described in the correct response.

5. Short-answer items:

Example of item:

What do you think would be the best part of (person's) work? Use information from the selection to explain your answer.

What do you think would be the worst part of (person's) work? Use information from the selection to explain your answer.

6. Extended-response items:

Example of item:

This selection might be useful to someone who wanted to (do something related to the subject of the selection). In what way might it be useful? What are three pieces of information that would be most useful?

Strand IC: Comprehends important ideas and details

Learning Target 11: Demonstrate understanding of major ideas and supportive details. (2.1.2)

Stimulus Attributes:

1. Format: Informational and task-oriented text

2. Content: The selection must be substantive enough that major and supporting ideas can be ascertained.

Item Description:

1. Possible item types: M, S

2. Item format: Clearly states requirement that students focus on major or supporting ideas and relationship between/among them.

3. Response format: Response may be phrase(s), graphic(s), sentence(s), or paragraph(s).

4. Multiple-choice items:

Example of stem:

Which sentence gives the most important idea in the (selection)?

Example of response choices:

a. The correct response is the major idea in the selection.

b. One incorrect response is an idea that is contained in the selection but is not the major idea.

c. One incorrect response is an idea that is related in some way to the major idea, but it is not in the selection.

5. Short-answer items:

Example of item:

(Give diagram with writing lines in a circle and three arms branching out from the circle; each arm ends with a box that has lines in it. Supply the major idea and one of the supporting ideas in the diagram.) The most important idea is in the circle. Write two more things in the boxes that tell about the most important idea.

Example of item:

The selection tells about (major idea). Give two facts from the selection that tell you that (state major idea).

Strand IA: Analyzes, Interprets, and Thinks Critically

Learning Target 16: Demonstrate understanding of text features (titles, headings, and other information divisions, table of contents, captions) and graphic features. (1.5.2)

Stimulus Attributes:

1. Format: Informational and task-oriented text

2. Content: The selection may contain one or more of the following elements:

a. titles, headings, other information divisions

b. table of contents

c. captions

d. graphic features

Item Description:

1. Possible item types: M, S

2. Item format: Clearly states requirement that students give evidence of having analyzed some significant text feature.

3. Response format: Response may be phrase(s), graphic(s), sentence(s).

4. Multiple-choice items:

Example of stem:

Look at (graphic) and (locate or interpret information).

Examples of response choices:

a. The correct response indicates appropriate location or interpretation of information.

b. One incorrect response is not the best choice because it focuses on an idea not represented in the graphic.

c. One incorrect response is too narrow to be acceptable.

OR

d. One incorrect response is not true.

5. Short-answer items:

Example of item:

How does the author use headings to help you read this article?

Example of item:

Look at the map on page (x). How would (event) in (place) affect people living in (place)? Tell how you used the map to answer this question.

Example of item:

You can use the index of (title) to find out _____. Look at the part of the index that is shown. Write two topics you would look up. Explain why each would give you helpful information.

Strand IA: Analyzes, Interprets, and Thinks Critically

Learning Target 17: Compare and contrast information presented. (2.2.1)

Stimulus Attributes:

1. Format: Informational and task-oriented text

2. Content: The selection must be substantive enough to allow the reader to identify similarities and differences between and among pieces of information that are presented.

Item Description:

1. Possible item types: M, S, E

2. Item format: Clearly states requirement that students compare and contrast information presented in a text.

3. Response format: Responses may be phrase(s), graphic(s), sentence(s), or paragraph(s).

4. Multiple-choice items:

Example of stem:

Which sentence tells how (two pieces of information in the article) are alike (or different)?

Example of response choices:

a. The correct response identifies an appropriate similarity (or difference).

b. Incorrect responses do not identify similarities (or differences).

5. Short-answer items:

Example of item:

How are (two elements in the selection) alike (or different)?

6. Extended-response items:

Example of item:

Students fill in 2-column chart (with headings that name two juxtaposed elements in the selection) with words that tell about the two. Then they write about ways in which these things are alike and ways in which they are different.

Strands LA and IA: Analyzes, Interprets, and Thinks Critically

Learning Target 19: Analyze author's purpose (including distinguishing between fact and opinion) and evaluate effectiveness for different audiences. (2.3.1, 2.3.2)

Stimulus Attributes:

1. Format: Informational, task-oriented text

2. Content: The selection must allow consideration of author's purpose and intended audience.

Item Description:

1. Possible item types: M, S, E

2. Item format: Clearly states requirement that students analyze author's purpose and/or evaluate the effectiveness of a piece for different audiences. One aspect of analyzing author's purpose is distinguishing between fact and opinion.

3. Response format: Responses may be phrase(s), graphic(s), sentence(s), or paragraph(s).

4. Multiple-choice items:

Example of stem:

Which of the following sentences from the article gives an opinion rather

than a fact?

Example of response choices:

a. The correct response identifies a clear opinion.

b. Incorrect responses identify facts rather than opinions.

Example of stem:

Which of the following best sums up the author's purpose in writing this article?

Example of response choices:

a. The correct response identifies an appropriate purpose.

b. Incorrect responses slightly misstate the purpose, emphasizing some less appropriate aspect of the piece.

5. Short-answer items:

Example of item:

Would you recommend this article to someone who is interested in (subject)? Tell why or why not.

6. Extended-response item:

Example of item:

These directions were written for someone who knows very little about (subject). How can you tell this? How would these directions be written differently if they were for someone who knows a great deal about (subject)?

http://www.k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/reading/testspecs/4rdspecs.asp

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